

**Senate Bill No.: 0708-23**

**UNIVERSITY SENATE**  
**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY**  
**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

Introduced by: Graduate Academic Council

Date: May 1, 2008

**PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A COMBINED M.A. WOMEN'S STUDIES  
/ PH.D. SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM**

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the University Senate approves the attached Proposal as approved by the College of Arts & Sciences and the Graduate Academic Council.
2. That this proposal be forwarded to the President for approval.

## **Proposal for a Combined M.A. in Women's Studies/PhD in Sociology Program**

MA Women's Studies, SED Program Code 22135, HEGIS Code 4903  
PhD Sociology, SED Program Code 03071, HEGIS Code 2208

Proposed Combined Program:

MA Women's Studies / PhD Sociology, HEGIS 4903/2208

This proposal for a combined M.A./PhD program is the outcome of a longstanding pattern of informal cooperation between the Departments of Sociology and Women's Studies, allowing Sociology PhD students with strong interests in Gender Studies and Women's Studies students with sociological interests to combine their work in these two programs. This is facilitated by the depth and strength of Sociology faculty with Joint or Affiliated appointments in Women's Studies, as well as the graduate-level cross-listed coursework taught by these faculty members. It is also facilitated by the willingness of both departments to allow requirements for one program to be included as a portion of the coursework for the other program.

Both the Sociology and the Women's Studies Departments have strong reputations nationally and on this campus. The Sociology Department has a strong record of scholarly accomplishment that has led to increasing national recognition and stature. The *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of sociology graduate programs in 2005 ranked the Department tied for 25<sup>th</sup>, with a ranking of 14 in the area of gender. An analysis in *Footnotes*, the newsletter of the American Sociological Association, in 2000 placed the Department third nationally in articles published in three leading journals of the discipline, a ranking that has extended back to the mid-1980s. National Research Council rankings place the Department in the first quartile on such measures as citations and publications per faculty. Sociology is also recognized within the University: the College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan cites Sociology as one of two doctoral programs that have achieved standards of excellence and are targeted for resources to sustain their reputations, and the University's Mission Review II document included Sociology among five campus graduate programs of distinction that have achieved national prominence.

There are no official rankings of Women's Studies Departments and Programs by the NRC or by the National Women's Studies Association; thus there are no comparative data for the Women's Studies Department, other than the reputation and productivity of its faculty. As one such indicator, the core and joint faculty include two Distinguished Professors, five Collins Fellows, and 8 holders of University Excellence Awards in Service, Teaching, and/or Research. In addition, the University at Albany's Women's Studies program is one of the largest and oldest in the country. The ten universities in the United States that offer a Ph.D. in Women's Studies could be considered the top tier in Women's Studies, and one of our faculty members received her Ph.D. in Women's Studies at Emory. Among the 25 universities with freestanding Master's degree programs,

University at Albany is one of the ten largest, and no others currently are located in New York State. Thus, because of our size, long history, organization around important contemporary themes, strong faculty record, and regional location, we believe the Women's Studies Department is well positioned to participate in this joint PhD program.

For many years, there has been a great deal of overlapping strength between the Departments of Sociology and Women's Studies. A large proportion (10 of 25) of Sociology faculty list Gender as a significant area of research, with 3 holding joint appointments and 5 additional faculty affiliates in Women's Studies. Many Women's Studies master's students have interests that overlap with areas of teaching and research in the Sociology Department and take Sociology courses (some of which are cross-listed), while Gender is one of the most popular areas for comprehensive examinations among PhD students in the Sociology Department.

Since the inception of the Women's Studies M.A. program, 11 Sociology PhD students have completed the Women's Studies M.A. while pursuing their PhD, and 2 Women's Studies M.A. students have been accepted into the Sociology PhD program. One additional student started both programs in Fall 2005 and is pursuing them concurrently.

We would like to formalize this option for three reasons. First, making this a formal joint program will ensure that current students are aware of this option, rather than the more informal publicity we have provided to current students in the past. Second, we will be able to advertise the joint program to prospective students through both of our departments and thus attract more students to the University who may be interested in this unique opportunity. Third, this may serve as a first step in the process through which the Women's Studies Department will eventually introduce its own PhD program.

The requirements for each program remain the same. They will be described below. Some explanatory material follows the programs. An Excel file containing a sample year-by-year schedule showing typical coursework for each separate program and the combined program is attached.

### **Women's Studies M.A.**

Course Requirements (32 credits minimum)

WSS 510 Graduate Orientation (1-2)

WSS 565 Feminist Theory (4)

WSS 590 Research Seminar (4)

Graduate course that considers the intersections of race, class, and sexuality with sex/gender (can be met by many possible courses)

Grounding in the Disciplines (3-8 credits) Students are required to ground themselves in more than one discipline or interdisciplinary area (added to this proposal to conform to new Women's Studies proposed MA requirements)

WSS 690 Final Project (3-4). Options for the project include a research-based paper, a comprehensive exam based on a reading list, or a pedagogy or community project with a written component.

Other courses as advised, including three that form a coherent field of study and that are chosen in consultation with the Graduate Director.

### **Sociology Ph.D.**

Course Requirements (60 credits minimum)

Soc 509 Research Methods (3)  
Soc 510 Sociological Theories 1 (3)  
Soc 511 Sociological Theories 11 (3)  
Soc 522 Intermediate Statistics (3)  
Soc 590A Orientation to Sociology\*  
Soc 590B Orientation to Sociology\*  
Soc 609 Multivariate Analysis (3)  
Teaching Tool Requirement (3)  
Supporting courses as advised (42 Credits)  
\*Attendance is mandatory; course is 0 credits. .

Other requirements

Research Tool Requirement (This may be met by proficiency in a foreign language or through coursework; if the latter, credits do not count toward the 60 credits for the degree.)

Methods Comprehensive Examination (contingent on grades)

Comprehensive Examinations in two subject areas

Dissertation

### **Notes**

The total number of credits for each degree will remain the same: 32 for the M.A. and 60 (plus Research Tool) for the PhD. Because of overlap, the combined total is 64 credits (including the Research Tool). The 32 credits of Women's Studies Department courses will overlap with 28 credits of the Sociology PhD, plus the 4 credits of WSS590 which counts as the PhD Research Tool (see below). It is assumed that the courses taken to meet the new Women's Studies Grounding in the Disciplines requirement will be likely to count toward the PhD, given that the PhD program allows much flexibility in taking courses outside the Department.

This implies that a significant body of courses, designated Soc/WSSxxx elective on the attached spreadsheet, will count toward both degrees simultaneously. (This designation is meant to indicate an elective course that is allowed to count toward both programs, as advised by both the Sociology and the Women's Studies Graduate Directors. This may or

may not be an officially cross-listed course, and may be in a department other than Sociology or Women's Studies.) This should not be a problem, given the willingness of the Graduate Directors to be flexible about electives. Currently there are four courses that are formally cross listed between the two departments, and many others have been counted toward both degrees in the past.

It is assumed that the two departments and their respective Graduate Directors will cooperate on both admissions and advisement, and that the Graduate Directors will communicate as needed about students in the joint program. Applicants will be reviewed by both Graduate Committees concurrently, so as to avoid delays. Among those students who are deemed acceptable for admission by both departments, the Graduate Directors will consult with each other about the students to be offered the line(s) assigned to the joint program, with the Women's Studies Graduate Committee making the final decision. The deadline for applications for the joint program (with funding) will be the current deadline for such applications in Sociology, January 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Sociology comprehensive exam in Gender (and others such as Sexualities if approved) will count as the Women's Studies Master's project. This is the current practice.

WSS590 (Research Seminar) is among the courses that count toward the Research Tool requirement for Sociology.

| <b>Soc PhD</b>        |                                      |                      |                | <b>WS M.A.</b> |                   |               |                  | <b>Combined</b>       |                                      |                             |                |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Fall Year 1           |                                      | Spring Year 1        |                | Fall Year 1    |                   | Spring Year 1 |                  | Fall Year 1           |                                      | Spring Year 1               |                |
| Soc509                | Methods (3)                          | Soc522               | Statistics (3) | WSS510         | Orientation (1-2) | WSS590        | Res. sem. (4)    | Soc509                | Methods (3)                          | Soc522                      | Statistics (3) |
| Soc510                | Theory I (3)                         | Soc511               | Theory II (3)  | WSS565         | theory (4)        | WSSxxx        | elective (3-4)   | WSS510                | Orientation (2)                      | Soc590B                     | Orientation(0) |
| Soc590A               | Orientation (0)                      | Soc590B              | Orientation(0) | WSSxxx         | elective (3-4)    | WSSxxx        | elective (3-4)   | Soc590A               | Orientation (0)                      | Soc/WSSxxx                  | elective (3-4) |
| Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | Socxxx               | elective (3)   |                |                   |               |                  | WSS565                | Theory (4)                           | Soc/WSSxxx                  | elective (3-4) |
|                       |                                      |                      |                |                |                   |               |                  |                       |                                      |                             |                |
| Fall Year 2           |                                      | Spring Year 2        |                | Fall Year 2    |                   | Spring Year 2 |                  | Fall year 2           |                                      | Spring Year 2               |                |
| Soc609                | Adv.Meth(3)                          | Soc606               | Co teaching(3) | WSS689         | Prop. Prep. (3-4) | WSS690        | Mast. Proj (3-4) | Soc510                | Theory(3)                            | Soc511                      | Theory(3)      |
| Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | Socxxx               | elective(3)    | WSSxxx         | elective (3-4)    | WSSxxx        | elective (3-4)   | Soc609                | Adv. Meth(3)                         | WSS590                      | Res. sem.(4)   |
| Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | Socxxx               | elective(3)    | WSSxxx         | elective (3-4)    | if needed     |                  | Soc/WSSxxx            | elective (3-4)                       | Soc606                      | Co teach.(3)   |
|                       | methods comprehensive exam if needed |                      |                |                | if needed         |               |                  |                       | methods comprehensive exam if needed |                             |                |
|                       |                                      |                      |                |                |                   |               |                  |                       |                                      |                             |                |
| Fall Year 3           |                                      | Spring Year 3        |                |                |                   |               |                  | Fall Year 3           |                                      | Spring Year 3               |                |
| Soc 693               | Comp prep (3)                        | Take first Comp exam |                |                |                   |               |                  | WSS690                | Mast. Proj.(3-4)                     | Take Comp exam on Gender    |                |
| Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | Soc 793              | Comp prep (3)  |                |                   |               |                  | Soc/WSSxxx            | elective (3-4)                       | Soc793                      | Comp prep(3)   |
| Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | Socxxx               | elective(3)    |                |                   |               |                  | Soc/WSSxxx            | elective (3-4)                       | Soc/WSSxxx                  | elective (3)   |
|                       |                                      | Socxxx               | elective(3)    |                |                   |               |                  |                       |                                      | Socxxx                      | elective (3)   |
|                       |                                      | Socxxx               | elective(3)    |                |                   |               |                  |                       |                                      | Receive WS M.A. end of year |                |
|                       |                                      |                      |                |                |                   |               |                  |                       |                                      |                             |                |
| Fall Year 4           |                                      | Spring Year 4        |                |                |                   |               |                  | Fall Year 4           |                                      | Spring Year 4               |                |
| Take second Comp exam |                                      | ABD status           |                |                |                   |               |                  | Take second Comp exam |                                      | ABD status                  |                |
| Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | Submit and defend    |                |                |                   |               |                  | Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | Submit and defend           |                |
| Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | proposal             |                |                |                   |               |                  | Socxxx                | elective (3)                         | proposal                    |                |
|                       | research tool course if still needed |                      |                |                |                   |               |                  | Socxxx                | elective (3)                         |                             |                |

Please see note on proposal text regarding Soc/WSSxxx designation.